THE HEART OF THE MATTER

"...he who has been forgiven little loves little."

Luke 7:47

As Christians we are often most concerned about our ability (or inability) to love our fellow men. Jesus' entire message was one of love and healing. We want to follow His lead. The fact remains, however, that we very often do not love others.

Those in prison are often aware that they are there as a direct result of hating, hurting, or maybe even killing another human being.

There is no heart that Jesus cannot reach, except the hard of heart.

Sometimes someone not in prison has actually said to me, "Well they deserve to be there, I don't care about them, they should be shot!" Yes, in most cases they do deserve to be there, but "shot".....!

Jesus came not for the righteous, but sinners. Two of them died with Him on the Cross, and one of them is in Heaven with Him!

There is no heart that Jesus cannot reach — except the hard of heart. And Jesus did not condemn sinners for hardness of heart, He condemned the righteous Pharisees.

Rev. Charity Benedicte

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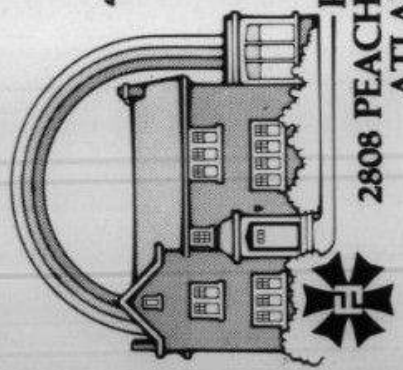
"...I was in prison and you came to visit me."
Matthew 25:36



FAITH CENTER,
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TEL: (404) 237-6570

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GUST 1981

Of Animals & Criminals. The Heart of the Matter.

Dr J Gordon Melton
ISAR Box 1311
Evanston, IL 60201

CALENDAR

SUNDAY, 1-2PM.
LORD'S DAY CELEBRATION.

Our weekly worship service. Healing, praise, music, fellowship.

SUNDAY, 2-5PM.
HEALING PRAYERS.

A time set aside after the service for individual prayer and counseling with a minister.

THURSDAY, 12-1PM.
MEN'S BIBLE STUDY.

Study, praise and inner healing. With Rev. John Christopher. Please call for location.

THURSDAY, 7:30-8:30PM.
THE CIRCLE OF POWER.

The weekly prayer group for members of this Fellowship. Non-members welcome. Prayers for healing. With Rev. Raphael de Peyer.

THURSDAY, 8:30-9:30PM.
BIBLE STUDY.

Each week we look at a particular subject that affects the lives of all of us. With Rev. John Christopher.

THE GIFTS OF HEALING
SATURDAY, AUGUST 22ND, 11AM-5PM.

We examine the many ways in which the Lord's gifts of healing are channeled and how you are a channel for healing. With Rev. Raphael de Peyer.

OF ANIMALS & CRIMINALS

Rev. John Christopher on a counseling visit to U.S.P., Atlanta.

"...every animal of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills."

Psalm 50:10

The way we relate to animals says volumes about the way we relate to God. Animals also are part of God's creation; different from us, but not inferior simply because they are different. They are not just a resource put here for our benefit and exploitation. To abuse an animal, to be cruel to it, to be indifferent to its suffering, is an offense against the life and beauty that God has created.

It is a statistical fact that childhood abuse of, and cruelty to, animals, is one of the warning signs of future criminal behavior. For example, studies at Yale University, the Menninger Institute and by Dr. Margaret Meade, have all shown a close connection between abuse of animals and future criminal behavior. When a child is raised to think that cruelty to animals is okay, he is raised to think that causing pain (and even death) is fine. And it isn't much of a step from abuse of animals to abuse of people. 'Son of Sam,' David Berkowitz, is just one example of a murderer who also abused animals. While not all violent criminals have a childhood history of cruelty to animals, many do.

From Faith Center we conduct ministries in three of the correctional facilities in Georgia. So the causes of criminal behavior, and the spiritual state of inmates, is a subject that the Lord has guided us to research. That research has also revealed some fascinating results demonstrating the healing and therapeutic effects of animals when they are related to positively. For example, in many Retirement Homes the introduction of pets has given the residents a sense of love and purpose that has had dramatic effects. And at the Lima (Ohio) State Hospital for the criminally insane one of the most successful programs centers around patients relating to animals. The Hospital Superintendent writes, "I have found that the therapeutic results of the pet therapy program have been both consistent and extremely beneficial for patient care."

Abuse of God's creatures is immensely damaging to those who do it. They become hardened, selfish and indifferent to anything but their own pleasure. Giving love and care to animals is truly good, because it is truly selfless. Can you imagine Jesus Christ being cruel to an animal? Or can you see Him helping and healing and protecting?

Rev. John Christopher

NEWS BRIEFS

ANIMAL ACTION

Rev. John Christopher has been speaking with many State and local officials concerning the dog-fighting issue. The Georgia Sheriff's Association, in a recent press release, came out strongly in favor of legislation to make dog-fighting a felony. We thank God also for the fact that New Mexico has just enacted a law similar to that being proposed in Georgia.

WGST, Atlanta's all news radio station, related Rev. Christopher's remarks connecting cruelty to animals to criminal behavior in its report on a public hearing, and famous RING RADIO (WRNG) broadcast an interview with him on the same subject during peak listening time. Praise God.

THE PRISON MINISTRY

Our current programs include counseling with inmates at Death Row at the State Prison in Jackson, Georgia, and at U.S.P., Atlanta, and a Friday prayer meeting at the Atlanta Women's Transitional Center.

Rev. Charity Benedicte (center) with some of the residents of Atlanta Women's Transitional Center after the Friday prayer meeting.

BIRMINGHAM OUTREACH

The recent visit of Revs. Raphael de Peyer and Jana Bernadette to Birmingham, July 10-12, focused mainly on God's concern for His animals. It began early with a taping for Channel 6's (WBRC-TV, the ABC affiliate) program, "Religion in the News," starring Honeypot, the Pekingese!

Later that day Rev. de Peyer addressed a meeting organized by Kay Redding of the Alabama Animal Adoption Society (AAAS) at the First National Bank Building downtown. He was followed by Sue Nuby of AAAS, describing the wonderful work its members do for stray and unwanted animals, housing them until good homes can be found. Because of the importance of getting across to the public the plight of God's creatures and the vital importance of man's relationship to them, we were delighted to see a Channel 6 news team arrive to film the proceedings and interview Rev. de Peyer and Sue Nuby, with a part of the 10PM News dealing with the subject.

It was a great pleasure to have Leonard Chamblee, Religion Editor of the Birmingham Post-Herald, covering the event for the paper, and we look forward to his in-depth report. Our thanks to him for announcing this meeting and our Sunday healing service in his column.

At the meeting and in his TV appearances Rev. de Peyer stressed God's concern for the whole of His creation, and His instructions to mankind to be loving, caring stewards of the earth and all the creatures in it. He discussed the terrible experiments done on animals, the terrific people working to end such cruelty, and alternative, non-animal, means of research.

Our special thanks to all AAAS members. We urge our Birmingham area readers to help their work in any way you can. Call (205) 951-2150.